

PANTHERS!



DESIGN BY: EMORY, MINISTER OF CULTURE, BLACK PANTHER PARTY

Black Panthers: Behind the myth

The Black Panther party is marked for extinction by the U.S. government.

In the pages which follow, the Guardian weekly newspaper, producers of this supplement, attempts to explain the reality behind the Panther myth created by the government, police and news media.

Included are a lengthy history of the party, from the idea of its formation, conceived in a prison cell, until today. The Panther 10-point program, guiding force behind the organization, is published in full. In an interview conducted in jail, party chairman Bobby Seale elaborates on the program and discusses the party views on guns, revolution, serving the people, male chauvinism and government repression. Another article analyzes the history of police harassment against the party, among other features.

Following is a statement especially written by the national office of the Black Panther party for this supplement.

By the Black Panther party

The Black Panther party stands for revolutionary solidarity with all people fighting against the forces of imperialism, capitalism, racism and fascism. Our solidarity is extended to those people who are fighting these evils at home and abroad. Because we understand that our struggle for our liberation is part of a worldwide struggle being waged by the poor and oppressed against imperialism and the world's chief imperialist, the United States of America, we—the Black Panther party—understand that the most effective way that we can aid our Vietnamese brothers and sisters is to destroy imperialism from the inside, attack it where it breeds. As for the Vietnamese people, for the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America as well.

The aims of the Black Panther party are manifest in our 10-point platform and program. We demand the right to self-determination for all third-world peoples and we call for a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only the black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny. Our program is not much different from any liberation front's program in the third world. Because we are victims of U.S. imperialism (community imperialism) just as the people of the third world are, we see our struggle as one and the same.

History has shown that while the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America were shackled in colonial bondage, black people in the U.S. were bound by the chains of racism and forced with its special brand of murder and terror. We see our revolutionary position vis-a-vis this evil as directly derived from the actions of liberationists like Nat Turner and Toussaint L'Ouverture. We must emulate the actions of these black heroes, combine them with the socialist perspective the party's 10-point program gives us.

In the words of the party's chairman, Bobby Seale, we will not fight capitalism with black capitalism; we will not fight imperialism with black imperialism; we will not fight racism with black racism. Rather we will take our stand against these evils with a solidarity derived from a proletarian internationalism born of socialist idealism.

Black Panthers: Serving the people, fighting

By Carl Davidson

The Alameda county jail contains an institution known to the black youth of the North Oakland ghetto as the "soul-breakers," the solitary confinement cells for "disruptive" prisoners. In 1964, the cells were more full than usual, following a series of food strikes and other demonstrations by black prisoners that rocked the jail during the peak months of the civil rights movement.

One of the prisoners later said the time in solitary gave him time to think "about the relationship between being outside of jail and being in." The prisoner was Huey P. Newton and the "soulbreaker" cell was the birthplace of the Black Panther organization of which Newton subsequently became minister of defense. He is presently in jail.

Before being convicted and sentenced for a year on an assault charge, Newton had been a law student at Merritt College, where, like any number of militant young blacks, he had several run-ins with the Oakland police. When his sentence was up, he got in touch with Bobby Seale, who he had known at Merritt and together with a few other friends they formed the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in the Fall of 1966.

"We're going to draw up a basic platform," Newton told Seale and the others, "that the mothers who struggled hard to raise us, that the fathers who worked hard to feed us, that the young brothers in school who come out of school semi-illiterate, saying and reading broken words, and all of these can read . . ." (See text below.)

The 10-point program

From the very beginning, the Panthers' 10-point program has been their hallmark within the left movement. At the same time, this has been the aspect of the party most obscured by the bourgeois news media which from the beginning has tried to pass the party off as a band of apolitical, gun-toting crazies.

The press based its distortions on the fact that the party openly advocated and practiced the right of armed self-defense. And, given the reign of white police terror constantly directed at the black citizens of Oakland, the Panthers viewed this aspect of their program as a day-to-day necessity.

"Our message is one and the same," Newton said in February 1967. "We're going to talk about black people arming themselves in a political fashion to exert organized force in the political arena to see to it that their desires and needs are met. . . . So it doesn't matter what heading you put on it, we're going to talk about political power growing out of the barrel of a gun."

The party put the program into practice. Among their first efforts in Oakland was the formation of community police patrols. Newton put his law-school training to work and instructed all party members in the basic constitutional rights governing arrests and gun laws. From there, the party established a system of armed patrol cars, completely legal, carrying both guns and law books and followed police patrol cars making their rounds of the ghetto.

Whenever black men or women were stopped by the police, armed Panthers would be on the scene, making sure their constitutional rights were not violated. The Oakland police were outraged. But the brutality, harassment and obscenity directed at black men and women tapered off. The program was a success and news of the party's existence spread rapidly.

The sight of armed and disciplined groups of Panthers soon became familiar in the Bay Area. The party went to great lengths, however, to stress two points about armed self-defense. First, they were operating within the law as defined by gun regulations and the constitutional right to bear arms. Second, that the arms were to serve a political purpose and were not to be viewed in purely military terms.

Just how the party operated was shown in the action taken around the death of Denzil Dowell early in 1967. Dowell, a black youth living in North Richmond, Calif., had been shot and killed by the police, whose official account of the slaying contradicted dozens of black eye-witnesses.

The Dowell family had called in the Panthers to investigate and the party decided to hold a streetcorner rally in the neighborhood to expose the facts of the slaying and the political importance of self-defense. The Panthers, assuming the police would try to stop the rally, decided to demonstrate their point on the spot and set up armed guards around the rally site.

Hundreds of black people turned out, many carrying their own weapons. The police who came to stop the rally quickly turned away, except for one, caught in the middle of the crowd, who sat quietly and listened to all the speeches.



Police raid Chicago office, Dec. 4, 1969.

Several Panthers addressed the crowd, explaining the party's program. Then Huey Newton, paraphrasing Mao tse-Tung, spoke: "The masses of the people want peace. The masses of the people do not want war. The Black Panther party advocates the abolition of war. But at the same time, we realize that the only way you can get rid of war, many times, is through a process of war. Therefore, the only way you can get rid of guns is to get rid of the guns of the oppressor. The people must be able to pick up guns, to defend themselves . . ."

At that point a police helicopter began buzzing over the crowd. Newton pointed up and shouted, "And always remember that the spirit of the people is greater than the man's technology!" The crowd cheered and hundreds signed up to work with the party that day.

At this time, the Panthers had about 75 members and were based primarily in the Bay Area. The party, however, did not view itself as only a local organization and now faced the problem of expanding on a statewide and national level. At the same time, the party's initial successes had already reverberated to the state legislature, where California Assemblyman Don Mulford introduced a gun control bill designed as an attack on the Panthers.

The party had to meet both the problems of spreading the word and defending their legal rights. An action was planned by Newton that was one of the more controversial events in the party's history. While the gun bill was being debated, on May 2, 1967, 30 armed Panthers, 24 men and 6 women, walked up the steps of the Capitol building, read a statement against the bill and stating the party's principles and walked into the visitors gallery of the legislative chambers.

When the police and press arrived, creating a flurry of excitement, the Panthers left the building, read the statement again and started to leave. Then they were all arrested on a charge of conspiring to disturb the peace and held for several days until bailed out.



A Panther minister of health at work.

From the Panthers' perspective, the action was carefully planned and completely legal at every step. They were acting no differently from any "gun lobby" registering opposition to the new law. But the spectre of "blacks-with-guns-invade-legislature" was too much for the press to take and the news media reported the event across the nation.

The Panthers viewed the action as a success. "I'm going to show you how smart brother Huey was when he planned Sacramento," Bobby Seale stated. "He said, 'Now the papers are going to call us thugs and hoodlums . . . But the brothers on the block, who the man's been calling thugs and hoodlums for 400 years, they're going to say, 'Them's some out of sight thugs and hoodlums up there . . . Who is these thugs and hoodlums?'"

"Huey was smart enough to know," Seale continued, "that the black people were going to say, 'Well, they've been calling us niggers, thugs and hoodlums for

Political program of the Black Panther party

Following is the 10-point program of the Black Panther party, adopted in October 1966.

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our black community. We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2. We want full employment for our people. We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. We want an end to the robbery by the capitalist of our black community. We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of 40 acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules was promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment in currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The Amer-

ican racist has taken part in the slaughter of over 50 million black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make.

4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings. We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.

5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.

6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service. We believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.

7. We want an immediate end to police

brutality and murder of black people. We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self-defense.

8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails. We believe that all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States . . .

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny . . .

police repression

400 years, that ain't gon' hurt me, I'm going to check out what these brothers is doing!"

But the success was not without certain drawbacks. On the plus side, the Panthers were now nationally known and within a few months claimed branches in Los Angeles, Tennessee, Georgia, New York and Detroit. Hundreds of black ghetto youth were attracted to the party and its program.

On the other side, Bobby Seale and several others served a six-month prison sentence as a result of the action. The gun restrictions were passed and the police and news media used the publicity, which had worked for the Panthers in the black community, to initiate a racist hysteria against the party among whites. The campaign was often successful and the reaction reached into some sectors of the black community as well.

From the Panther point of view, the white reaction was not the result of any "mistake" on their part, but an unavoidable initial aspect of the course of revolutionary struggle in the United States that would eventually be overcome.

Two political dynamics

"We feel there are two things happening in this country," said Eldridge Cleaver, the now-exiled minister of information. "You have a black colony and you have the white mother country and you have two different sets of political dynamics involved in these two relationships. What's called for in the mother country is a revolution and there's a black liberation struggle called for in the colony."

What the "different dynamics" meant was that whites, even revolutionary whites, would tend to distort or misunderstand the nature of the black struggle until black control over the movement in the colony had been established. Once that was resolved, then unity between the two struggles was not only possible but desirable.

Following the Sacramento action and the legal defense they had built around it, the Panthers continued their operations in the Oakland black community. The police patrols continued, as well as the party's educational work around its 10-point program and the establishment of the Black Panther newspaper.

The party also continued and developed further its policy of following through on whatever immediate problems black people would present to it and see that they were solved.



Liberation school in S.F.

Newton stated, again and again, that the party "was the people's party" and was "like an oxen, to be ridden by the people and serve the needs of the people." If the people wanted a traffic light, the Panthers told the police to install one immediately or the party would start directing traffic. If black children were being harassed in the schools, the Panthers organized mothers to patrol the halls while armed party members stood guard outside. Liberation schools were also set up after regular classes were over.

But as the party's successes grew, so did the intensity of police harassment. Police bulletin boards blossomed with descriptions of party members and their cars. On foot or driving around, Panthers would be stopped and arrested on charges ranging from petty traffic violations to spitting on the sidewalk. (See statistics of police harassment, page 4.)

On Oct. 28, 1967, the issue came to a head: early in the morning, a police car reported, "I have a Panther car." Several hours later, one policeman was dead and Huey Newton was under arrest with four bullet wounds in his stomach. When he recovered, he was charged with murder and locked in Alameda County jail without bail.

Newton immediately proclaimed his innocence, but the police and press once again whipped up and intensified a racist, hysterical reaction to both Newton and the Black Panther party. For its part, the party mobilized its forces for a "Free Huey" defense campaign.

While thousands of people, black and white, rallied to Newton's defense, in the beginning the unequivocal demand to "Free Huey" was the cause of some footdragging in the white liberal and radical community. Many argued that the demand should be "Fair Trial for Huey" which would supposedly win wider support.

But the Panthers were waging a political defense and held to the position in their program that black people could only receive a fair trial by a jury of their peers. Since the colonial and class character of the California courts precluded that possibility, the only just demand—and the only one that made sense—was that Huey Newton be set free.

What made the debate so intense was the emergence of the Peace and Freedom party as a political force in the California left and eventually across the country. The PFP was a coalition mainly of white left-liberals and radicals organized as a third party electoral alternative in opposition to the Vietnam war and in support of black liberation.

The Panthers saw in the PFP's campaign machinery a chance for a wider educational campaign in Newton's defense. But the party held that any "functional coalition" with whites could only be formed on the basis of support for the demand to "Free Huey." Thus, to form the alliance, the white radicals had to win over the liberals, many of whom saw the Panthers as a threat to the PFP's vote-getting "respectability."

As the time approached for the PFP to file its ballot petitions at the end of 1967, a shortage of signatures forced the issue. The radicals won out and the alliance was formed. The Panthers took the petitions into the black community and put the PFP on the ballot—but with Huey Newton, Bobby Seale and Kathleen Cleaver as candidates for state offices running on the basis of the Panther 10-point program. Eldridge Cleaver was to be the California PFP's Presidential candidate, pending the national convention.

The party's coalition with the PFP gave them an immediate public political exposure—among both blacks and whites—that would have been difficult to attain otherwise. And, given the needs of Newton's defense and the probability of further repression, the move was seen as important, if not necessary, for the party's survival.



Fred Hampton at a Chicago rally, 1968.

The Panthers saw the alliance as principled, respecting the rights of black people to self-determination. The mutual agreement was that the Panthers would set the PFP line on all issues related to the black community. All other policy would be formulated on the basis of one-man, one-vote. As Eldridge Cleaver summed it up: "We approached the whole thing from the point of view of international relations. We feel that our coalition is part of our foreign policy . . ."

Nevertheless, a number of black radicals outside the party viewed the alliance with whites with dismay, if not as a sell-out. The main thrust of black power—the legitimacy and necessity for blacks to form independent, all-black organizations—had only recently been established.

The issue was complicated by the fact that the Panthers were in the process of forming a "merger" with SNCC, which was formally announced at an Oakland "Free Huey" rally on Feb. 17, 1968. The principle leaders of SNCC—James Forman, Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown—were named to leading positions in the party, with the leaders of both groups announcing a plan to form a mass black political party.

The "merger" was short-lived and began to crumble almost as soon as it was formed. While the full story is still not known, the event was significant in shaping

the Panthers' relationship to other forces in the black movement.

Soon after the PFP campaign and the defense of Newton got underway, the anticipated police repression began. On Jan. 16, 1968, police raided the Cleavers' home. "From then on," said Kathleen Cleaver, "the harassment of the Party intensified."

A month later, following a raid on his home, Seale was arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit murder. Newly formed party branches were harassed across the country. On April 3, a public party meeting was broken up by armed illegal searches by Oakland police. Then, on April 6, two days after the King assassination, dozens of police opened fire on a home where a Panther meeting was taking place. Bobby Hutton, a founder of the party, was murdered while trying to surrender and Eldridge Cleaver was wounded and placed under arrest.

Huey's trial

The trial of Huey Newton lasted from July 15 to Sept. 8 and marked a high point in the Panthers' history. The public attention given the trial, due in large part to the defense efforts and the PFP campaign, provided the Panthers with an excellent opportunity, not only to defend Newton, but to wage a political offensive as well.

From start to finish, the trial was viewed as a model political defense. Newton's lawyer, Charles Garry, exposed the class and racial bias built into the court system at every step. Within the trial, Newton managed to explain the Panther program and why he was a political prisoner, as well as demonstrate his innocence. Outside the courtroom, the party mobilized the community in a continual series of mass rallies.

When the verdict came in, the political character of the trial became apparent. Newton was convicted of involuntary manslaughter, a charge of which he could not possibly have been guilty. The evidence of the trial was such that he could only be guilty or innocent of first-degree murder. The "compromise" verdict simply revealed the political forces at play.

Reagan administration enraged

California's Reagan administration and the Oakland police who wanted Newton executed were enraged at the outcome of the trial. Only hours after the verdict was announced, the Panther office was riddled with bullets by drunken cops. On Sept. 27, the day Newton was sentenced, the courts reversed the decision on Cleaver's parole and gave him 60 days to return to prison.

Cleaver had played a leading role in Newton's and the party's defense. After the California PFP named him its Presidential candidate, several other states had followed suit. This had opened up a wide range of speaking engagements around the country, along with greater access to the news media.

In August, he won the national PFP nomination, even though his name was kept off several state ballots (including California's) because of his youth. The educational effect of the campaign had clearly helped the party's survival and even led to its growth. In the end, the official election tallies gave him almost 200,000 votes. In November, Cleaver went into foreign exile rather than return to prison, where he believed he would be killed.

The party, which had dropped the "for self-defense" from its name to reemphasize its political character, was now larger than ever, with 30 branches and perhaps a thousand members at the end of 1968. "We gave the whole year of 1968 to the pigs," said Seale, commenting on the repression, "and thank them for organizing our organization."

(Continued on page 8)

GUARDIAN

This special supplement on the Black Panther party was prepared by the Guardian, the largest independent radical weekly in the U.S. Readers who may have been introduced to the Guardian through this supplement, which is being distributed independently of the newspaper, may take out a trial subscription to the Guardian—20 pages each issue—for only \$1—for 10 issues. You may also order more copies of this supplement. Mail to Guardian, 197 E. 4th St., New York, N.Y. 10009.

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Bobby Seale explains Panther politics

Black Panther party chairman Bobby Seale is serving a four-year prison term for contempt of federal judge Julius Hoffman's conspiracy trial court in Chicago. Sentence was imposed in November after Seale was bound and gagged in the courtroom when he sought to represent himself during the Chicago 8 trial in the absence of his lawyer. He still must stand trial again on charges resulting from the confrontation in Chicago during the Democratic convention. In addition, the party chairman is awaiting extradition to Connecticut for his alleged role in the case of the New Haven Panther 14, accused of murdering Panther Alex Rackley. Following is an interview conducted with Seale Feb. 11 in San Francisco County jail by Guardian staff correspondent Francis Furey.

You have been in jail since August. Could you give some details on your treatment in jail since then.

Well I've been in a number of jails since I was arrested Aug. 19—S.F. County and Cook County [Chicago] and a number of other jails across the country. In S.F. County jail I was thrown in the hole for having a Black Panther party newspaper that one of the guards here actually let me have after my lawyer, Charles Garry, requested that I have it based on the fact that I had to make some notes and outlines on some speeches that I had made, the content of which was to come up in court.

Could you describe the hole?

The hole itself is a box five feet wide and seven feet long. You have no bed, no bunk, no toilet. There is only a hole in the floor where one could defecate, urinate and this often overflows. This hole was ruled unconstitutional by state supreme court in 1966. The ruling stated that a man's supposed to have at least a mattress of some kind, full meals and a toilet. Recently there has been a grand jury investigation of county jail conditions, but every time a grand jury member comes around they take prisoners out of the hole until he has left; then they'll put him back in.

What kind of reading are you allowed here?

The only thing allowed is the daily newspaper and of course that's very limited in terms of any kind of black history or literature dealing with the revolutionary change that's going on in America. Even if I wanted to read about the history of Chicano people, Asian or African peoples, they won't allow those materials in the jails. They call it contraband here.

Why were you charged in the Chicago 8 conspiracy case since your connection with the other seven was tenuous and you spent only some 12 hours in Chicago during the riot period?

Well, I was one of the leaders in the Panther's contribution to the revolutionary struggle along with

Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver. Huey was in jail and Cleaver was in political exile and I think they also saw the necessity to move on me. At the time I was charged I was on a speaking tour in the Scandinavian countries so perhaps they were hoping I wouldn't come back. All in all, their reasons for moving against me are the same as the reasons they are now moving against brother [David] Hilliard and other Panther leaders. They don't have any evidence against me. All I did was make a speech [in Chicago] about the right to self-defense against brutal, unjust attack. We've always made speeches like this, but they turned it around and said that I was advocating a riot. The Black Panther party shows that we don't believe in spontaneous riots because we've seen so many of our people killed due to the lack of proper organization. Another reason they included me in the conspiracy is that the power structure is beginning to realize that 30 million black people are beginning to listen to the Panther party. If we were black racists they could easily isolate us, but such is not the case.

The Black Panther party has been criticized for its rhetoric. What is your reaction to this?

When we use the term "pig," for example, we are referring to people who systematically violate peoples' constitutional rights—whether they be monopoly capitalists or police. The term is now being adopted by radicals, hippies and minority peoples. Even the workers, when the pigs supported strike-breakers like they did at Union Oil in Richmond where 100 local police came in and cracked strikers' heads, began to call them by their true name. But I think people, especially white people, have to come to understand that the language of the ghetto is a language of its own and as the party—whose members for the most part come from the ghetto—seeks to talk to the people, it must speak the people's language.



Party chairman Bobby Seale.

Were you brought to trial in the conspiracy as a result of the continuing crackdown by Mayor Daley and Chicago authorities on the Black Panther party, which in December resulted in the deaths of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark? Were they afraid of the growing influence of the party on Chicago's West Side?

Definitely. But I would not only localize this conspiratorial attempt to part of the avaricious demagogic ruling class, which extends from the Nixon regime on down. All are part and parcel of this attempt to wipe out the party. When we see what happened to brother Fred Hampton and brother Mark Clark in the pre-dawn raid. When we see this kind of action we see the smack of fascism. They think they can get away with what they're doing because they've fooled and misled the people. You see when they charge a person with a crime the mass media will tend to discredit a person completely. We see this happen in the Panther cases in Connecticut and New York... and in the case of brother Hilliard, there was no understanding in the press of the way he talks and the language in the ghetto. For example his remarks

represented a gross criticism of Nixon and the power structure he represented. The media took his remarks out of this context and created a climate of public opinion whereby he could be charged with threatening the President's life. As a result of this type of media coverage, law enforcement felt that the people had been sufficiently misled to allow them to move on the Panthers.

After they had effectively taken away the leadership they could then move on the rank and file membership of the Party?

Exactly.

Why do you think this backfired on them?

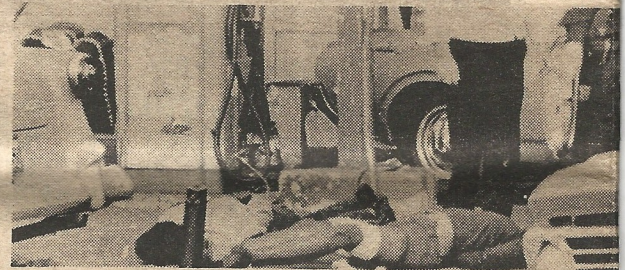
They couldn't wipe the blood off their hands quick enough. They had done similar things in the past. A lot of brothers had been shot and killed. Before, the press would print the police reports and no one would be able to know what really happened. But in this case it was different. An estimated 80,000 people went through the house where Hampton was shot dead and actually saw the bullet holes in the wall. These people received a first-hand experience of genocidal tactics.

In the case of the police attack in Los Angeles, a similar educational experience took place didn't it?

Precisely. I assume that what the L.A. police hoped to do was pull off an early morning 10 or 15 minute raid and shoot up and kill whoever they wanted to and get out of there but the party was smart and a sister in the office got a phone call out before they cut the lines saying we need the people and press here, and they came to the shoot-out scene. So when the police version of the story came out in the press the people were able to compare that version with what they saw.

It is significant that in the L.A. case some 300 to 500 police equipped with the most advanced weaponry took five hours to overcome a force of 14 men and women Panthers.

That's an important point. You know they had a tank ready on the scene. That's fascism—that's all that is. Despite police reports to the contrary that they knocked on the door and asked the brothers to come out, the brothers were sleeping when the police riddled the office with bullets and when they broke down the door and came in shooting the brothers had no choice but to defend themselves. Such tactics reveal the true nature of police intentions: one, to shoot up and kill as many Panthers as possible; two, to put the rest in jail on trumped up charges. In other words, law enforcement wants to wipe the Panthers out. They don't hide their



Bound, wounded after Los Angeles police attack.

conspiratorial intent. In the L.A. case it was in the papers how [Gov. Ronald] Reagan and [FBI head] Hoover were talking over the phone before the raid shows this. Then when the Justice Department claims that it has no intention of wiping out the Panthers we know its claims to be false and we know that they are bent on political repression.

Statistics of repression

"He afraid of our blackness!... They afraid of the power of the people!" shouted one of the young Panther 21 at pre-trial hearings in New York this month. Perhaps he summed up some of the reasons for the massive government repression of the party that includes over 1000 incidents of harassment and 19 cases of homicide between May 1967 through the end of 1969.

Compiled by the office of Charles Garry, chief attorney for the national Panther party, harassments range from a federal indictment for alleged connection to a murder with no bail for the accused—to a charge on July 6, 1969 against John Washington, a Los Angeles Panther member, for spitting on the sidewalk.

Charges included in more than two years of police harassment across the country were roughly the following: over 35 charges of disorderly conduct, loitering, etc.; over 39 charges of resisting arrest or interfering with a police officer; over 24 narcotics charges; 4 Selective Service cases; over 125 charges of conspiracy (to bomb, murder,

steal, commit arson); over nine minor formal court actions such as bench warrants; over 36 traffic violations including the May 1969 incident in Chicago where police rammed the back of Panther member Garry Tyler's car and then gave him a ticket for no tail lights; over 129 charges involving theft or stolen property; over 152 acts or charges of a violent nature such as of murder, arson, aggravated battery and attacks by police on Panther members and offices; over 150 charges involving weapons, such as failure to register or concealment.

The charges followed the Panthers wherever they went: In Mexico Aug. 15, 1968, three Panthers—George Murray, Landon Williams and David Hilliard—were kidnapped by the FBI; in Hawaii two days earlier, Kathleen Cleaver was refused entrance to Japan; Big Man was refused entrance to West Germany in December of last year.

The West coast saw over 336 incidents including 149 in Los Angeles, 55 in Seattle, 42 in San Francisco, 32 in Sacramento, 28 in Oakland, seven in Eugene and one each in

Richmond, Calif., Berkeley and Salt Lake City.

The Midwest saw over 170 harassments in Chicago, 36 in Indianapolis, 19 in Milwaukee, 10 each in Detroit and Denver, five in Kansas City, Mo. and two in Des Moines.

In the East the Panthers were harassed over 152 times in New York. They were also harassed in White Plains, Albany, Peekskill, Jersey City, Boston, Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pa., New Haven and Philadelphia.

Bails have ranged from \$25 for 17 Panther members and \$1000 for 60 members (one was forfeited) to \$100,000 for 29 members (two were reduced to \$50,000 and one to \$10,000).

The 19 homicides listed by attorney Garry's office began with the finding of the body of Arthur Glenn Morris (name also given as Arthur Glenn Carter) in Los Angeles in March, 1968, with police claiming to have no information about his violent death. The second death was the following month when Bobby Hutton was shot by police in Oakland as he surrendered with his hands in the air, unarmed. The last homicides were in Chicago on Dec. 4 when police murdered Fred Hampton in his bed and Mark Clark in a pre-dawn raid.

Perhaps the most glaring actions against the Panthers is the raids against Black Panther party ing the past two years. This does the often fatal and destructive police to various Black Panther h

The first listed raid was 1968, when with shotguns r broke up a meeting of the part Neil's Church in Oakland.

Other raids in 1968 July, police attacked Seattle office (night of Huey Newton's senate land office shot up; October, D shot up; December, Newark off by police; Denver office raided second time police did \$9000 wage and allegedly stole \$150); office raided, ransacked and tea Moines office attacked by police.

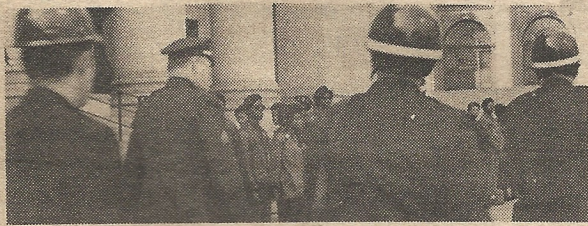
The 1969 raids included: Francisco, Los Angeles, Jersey C Moines offices attacked, the las stroyed by bombing; June, ra offices in Chicago, San Diego, and Detroit; July, police against office in a 45-minute shootout to burn the office down—stol destroyed food for breakfast pro

With regard to the Chicago conspiracy trial, defendant Rennie Davis has said that the single most important issue dramatized by the trial was racism, as symbolized by your gagging and chaining. How do you see that?

Well, it's symbolic in the sense that judicial racism is as old as Dred Scott and it shows that very little has changed since 1857 in the courts. On the other hand, my chaining and gagging points out the fact that in America nobody has justice. I mean the white cats in that trial are treated similar to the way I was treated. The racist mentality can also be applied to people other than blacks. This is the most important point raised by my treatment in that trial. I mean the fact that they had black marshals in the trial didn't really stop the racism of the trial itself. The use of the black marshals was a diversionary tactic on the part of the court. The court could then claim as it did that the presence of black law enforcement in the courtroom made my claims of racism inapplicable. Well, I say that if a black judge was going to use the same fascist, racist tactics as Julius Hoffman, I would have acted no differently. You see an important thing to understand is that the system itself is white.

It's evident lately that there has been a tactical change on the part of radicals with regard to the judicial system. Heretofore radicals, both white and black would sit back and allow the court to proceed in "orderly" fashion. Now radicals have decided to make their trials into political forums to expose the political nature of the prosecution and to publicize political ideas and life styles. Why has this change happened?

We have all found that the process of the American judicial system, including trial procedure and jury makeup, presently violates the constitutional right to a fair trial by jury of one's peers. It doesn't stop in the courtroom. Look at the ransom bails in the N.Y. 21 case, which amount to forcible detention. They do have bail—\$100,000 each—but it can't be met. This is an outright violation of constitutional rights. In my case in Chicago, I wasn't allowed to even defend myself, whereas in Nazi Germany in 1933, a Bulgarian Communist accused of setting the Reichstag fire was allowed to defend himself. In L.A. recently, the Panthers accused of attempted murder in the Watts shootout brought rats to the courtroom which they had caught in their jail cells.



Outside New York courthouse.

Even jail conditions violate one's constitutional rights. In that same jail recently, one of the deputies tried to beat a brother up and the brothers had to defend themselves against the deputies, so one can see that the unconstitutionality of the judicial system applies to all levels, including the penal. The people who bear the blunt end of this system are now showing a willingness to stand up against it and recent trials point this out. They are willing to define a racist judge as a fascist and a pig—that's what the party means by pig, one who violates a person's constitutional rights. In any case the judicial branch of the government is the last area of appeal for a person whose rights have been violated by unjust laws and brutal enforcement, so when you get to a courtroom and find that the judge himself is a fascist at this point

one doesn't have much choice but to expose his racism and fascism and stand up for his constitutional rights. All I did in Chicago was to exercise my legal right to speak in my own behalf and I was given four years in jail as a result. But I think the most serious injustice perpetrated by the court system in America is the inability of a black man to get a jury of his peers. In Huey Newton's trial there was one black on the jury and he was over 40. This happened in a city which is over 50% black. Now Huey had been a student in college. Why couldn't he have had some young people or students on that jury?

What do you think about the recent revelation by the Mayor of Seattle that federal authorities attempted to influence him to raid the Panther headquarters in that city?

It's no revelation. We have been talking about a federally-led conspiracy against the party for some time. In one sense it is a revelation that a government official would expose the attempt. But the man compared us to Minutemen and we're not Minutemen. We don't believe in building arsenals of weapons. If you were to go into a Panther office and find 10 Panthers you would probably find that each one of these people owns a gun for self-defense only. The party's rules are quite strict about this. I think it's important that this official didn't give in to the Gestapo tactics of federal law enforcement, but I think his conception of the party's attitude about self-defense is erroneous. This is a typical mistake: many people concentrate on the self-defense aspect of the party's program and don't take a look at other programs the party supports like free breakfast for children, community control of the police, free clothing programs, cooperative markets, cooperative housing, with an emphasis to unify all workers around the issue of a 30-hour work week in this country with the same pay, the issue of jobs for the poor and oppressed and the issue of who controls the means of production in this country. In other words, drastic social change through socialism. With this in mind, it is hard to accuse us of being Minutemen types.

The self-defense aspect of the party does bother a lot of people in this country. Could you clarify the Panther position?

First of all, no Panther can break a gun law unless his life is in danger and the party recognizes this. If he does so we will expel or suspend him depending on the seriousness of his offense. Panther party training in the area of self-defense includes a study of gun laws, safe use of weapons and there is a strict rule that no party member can use a weapon except in the case of an attack on his life—whether the attacker be a police officer or any other person. In the case of police harassment the party will merely print the offending officer's picture in the newspaper so the officer can be identified as an enemy of the people... no attempt on his life will be made.

What is the Black Panther party's position on male chauvinism?

The fight against male chauvinism is a class struggle—that's hard for people to understand. To understand male chauvinism one has to understand that it is interlocked with racism. Male chauvinism is directly related



Ateni Shakur, protesting N.Y. 21 trial.

to male domination and it is perpetuated as such by the ruling class in America. When we talk about women's liberation we're not talking so much about biological equality. There is a basic biological difference between males and females just as there are even more striking biological similarities between the sexes. Though male and female differ with respect to the genitalia, all human beings have an essential biological similarity—two arms, two legs and what have you. But that is not what we're talking about when we talk about equality for women. All people talk, think, feel and human relationships have to be determined on that basis, not on a sex basis. The same goes for racial differences. The puritanical tradition also had a lot to do with male chauvinism. The taboo on sex was absurd in the first place because three billion people got on this earth that way. Looking back in history, it is easy to see that women have received the blunt end of European prejudice against sex. How is racism connected with this? A good part of racism is the absurd psychological fears on the part of people who think that the black man has a bigger penis than the white. Thus male supremacy on the basis of sexual organs can be connected to racial supremacy arrived at

through the notion of sexual differences by race. Cultural nationalists, like Ron Karenga, are male chauvinists as well. What they do is oppress the black woman. Their black racism leads them to theories of male domination as well. Thus black racists come to the same conclusions that white racists do with respect to their women. The party says no to this. Personally, I don't think that women who want liberation want penises—they just want to be treated as human beings on an equal basis, just as blacks who demand the liberation of their people. Eldridge Cleaver talked about this in "Soul on Ice." Superman never tries to relate to Lois Lane, nor does he try to relate to the oppressed. Rather he relates to superficial violence, throwing people halfway across the ocean, etc. The concept I'm trying to establish is the cross-relation of male chauvinism to any other form of chauvinism—including racism. In other words the idea of saying "keep a woman in her place" is only a short step away from saying "keep a nigger in his place." As Eldridge said in his book, the white woman is a symbol of freedom in this country. The white man took this chick and stuck her up on a pedestal and called her the Statue of Liberty and gave her a torch to hold. Well I say put a machine gun in her other hand.



Women Panthers in San Francisco rally.

Recently Jerry Rubin remarked that although the judge in the conspiracy trial has complained about the language of the defendants, the real obscenity in the case was the willingness of the court to use violence in the courtroom to prevent the defendants from asserting their constitutional rights.

That's typical. It shows the system's preoccupation with words rather than the more basic question of how people relate to one another. For example, in lower class terms, motherfucker doesn't necessarily mean a sexual taboo. It can be used five times in one sentence by a brother in the black ghetto and each time it will have a different meaning and connotation. In any case, research indicates that the origin of the term comes from the slave master's rape of a slave's mother. We see the taboo concept as being closely linked to racism. At the same time the party sees the need to stop using the term just so we can get a segment of the white population to understand the aims of the party. When we talk about obscenity in the courtroom, I think the most obscene



This month, in New York City.

thing is the ruling class' refusal to relate to the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of those who culturally refuse to go along with its norms. We say human beings have a right to live and survive. The obscenity in the Chicago courtroom is the violation of human and constitutional rights.

Much of the mass media has been playing up the circus aspect of the trial in Chicago and has been treating Hoffman as an exceptional case in a judicial system which is otherwise just and honorable. What do you think?

People like Hoffman are the rule especially with respect to minority peoples. Murtagh, the judge in the New York Panther 21 case, is a notorious racist. It's just now that people like Murtagh and Hoffman are being exposed for what they are: fascist and racist.

Do you expect any changes in the structure or direction of the Black Panther party in the future?

Our objective is the education of the people. I don't think we'll make the same mistake that the Communist party made in the 1950s as a result of the repressive measures the government took during that time. You have to go out and fight the battle for the oppressed people—white, black, red, brown—wherever they may be. The party's recent formation of the National Committee to Combat Fascism represents a change, a good one, in that it creates an organization in which movement groups can come together and coalesce to fight the oppressor. In any case I don't think there is any way for the party to stop doing what it's doing and I don't think it will undertake any significant policy change in the near future.

Panther party on trial in Los Angeles

By Patty Lee Parmalee
Guardian Los Angeles Bureau

The entire Black Panther party and its political philosophy are on trial here, not just the young black men and women known as the Los Angeles 18.

The defendants are charged with conspiracy to commit murder, a capital offense and other felony charges stemming from police raids on Panther offices in the pre-dawn hours of Dec. 8. In one raid at a Panther office, the defenders held off 300 police for several hours in a wild exchange of gunfire.

Perhaps concerned that the police raids may be determined illegal or that the Panther role in the gunfight will be recognized as a clear instance of self-defense, the prosecution is attempting to divert attention by attacking the party.



Even the Los Angeles Times recognized this method. At the end of the three-week preliminary hearing, the Times reporter summarized on Jan. 24: "Much of the evidence presented... was an indictment of the Black Panther party. The prosecution charged that the party policy called for armed insurrection and murder of police officers. They introduced party publications, confiscated party records and intelligence reports to support their contentions. They then presented evidence intended to show the Los Angeles group took actions to carry out those plans."

During the preliminary hearing, 56 witnesses—mostly police officers—attempted to connect the defendants with various crimes allegedly committed by other Panthers and to create the impression that the Panthers were planning a war of aggression against the police. One police witness described the incident in which police murdered young Wally Toure Pope Oct. 28 and called it an ambush by Panthers—whereupon the deputy district attorney stated that the L.A. 18 were also parties to such acts of violence. Another cop testified Panthers were plotting to lay a trap for police and firemen by setting fire to neighboring buildings and then firing from their headquarters on firemen and policemen who responded. This absurd claim is only one of many that had nothing whatever to do with the charges brought against the defendants.

The carefully cultivated impression being foisted on the public and the yet unselected jury that the Panthers are danger-

Los Angeles

ous beasts has been compounded daily by the way the defendants are led into the courtroom handcuffed and chained together. Defense attorney Leo Branton's attempt to get the judge to intervene against the chaining was unsuccessful. Branton charged they were treated "like inmates of some Gestapo establishment" and added, "I can't help notice, in newspaper pictures, that the defendants in the Tate and LaBianca case, one of the most atrocious murders in history, are not handcuffed."

After almost a month in jail, the 11 defendants who had been held without bail finally got bail set Feb. 6. Bail, or ransom as they call it, ranges from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Of the 22 Panthers originally charged Dec. 8, three were released before the pre-arraignment and one, Gilbert Parker, was released after the preliminary hearing for lack of evidence. He was in fact outside the Central St. Panther office when police attacked. Police grabbed him and took him to the roof as a shield so Panthers inside would not shoot at them through a skylight. Parker was arrested by the cops and charged with the same crimes as those inside, then badly beaten in jail.

Few Panthers allowed bail

Only two of the remaining 18 defendants are presently out on bail, and these two were not at the Central St. office Dec. 8.

Defense strategy when the trial begins in March will be to try to hurry the proceedings along, since the first priority is to get the Panthers back onto the streets. The first defense motion in the trial proper will probably be a motion to dismiss charges since the search warrant leading to arrest was illegal.

It was the search warrant, signed by superior court judge Antonio Chavez two days before the raid, that originally set the strategy of trying the party for its beliefs, rather than individuals for their actions. The preliminary hearing and presumably also the trial are only extensions of the logic of the warrants.

Lawyers here say they have never seen a warrant like this 18-page document, which purports to show that "there is probable and reasonable cause" for issuing a search warrant, for including a no-knock clause and for entering in the night on the basis of an interpretation of Panther politics and prior incidents between Panthers and police in other cities. The warrant goes so far as to cite the Chicago police version of the killings of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark as if it were fact, as well as stating "in the last several years, members of the Black Panther party have killed policemen in Oakland and a policeman in Santa Anna." It is true that a Panther was accused of killing a Santa Anna cop last spring but he was released for lack of evidence and another Panther is still awaiting trial on the charge. The killing of Wally Toure Pope is also cited as an example of Panther violence against police.

To show that these alleged acts are party policy, the warrants reprint "Executive Mandate No. 3" by Huey Newton, which is nearly two years old. It describes the St. Valentine's Day Massacre in 1929, when outlaws posed as police to gain entrance to the locked premises of rival bootleggers, whom they killed with machine guns. Huey lists a series of threats and illegal entrees of Panther residences and concludes, "We have no way of determining that a man in uniform involved in a forced outlaw entry into our home is in fact a guardian of the law. He is acting like a lawbreaker and we must make an appropriate response." The search warrant interprets Huey's directive as advocating "violence to police officers."

Ironically, Newton's warning on the St. Valentine's Day Massacre was almost a prophecy of the way police behaved at 4:30 a.m. Dec. 8. The police version of the battle states they simply yelled "Open up, this is the police" at the door and then battered the door down—never mentioning that they had warrants. (Panthers say that they were awakened by the sound of cops shooting through the door.) Even were the police story true, it would be clear why the Panthers thought they were being attacked. Many prominent black citizens as well as lawyers have stated that the raiding party intended to murder the Panthers.

Search warrant a ploy

The evidence that the extraordinary search warrant was an excuse to catch the Panthers by surprise and murder them at night appears compelling. Why was no attempt made on several possible occasions to peacefully arrest Panthers named in the warrant prior to the attacks? Why did police conduct the raid in the early morning darkness, then tell the news media the raids started at 5:30 (daybreak)? Why did police cut off all communications in the attack area, including the streets and pay telephones? Why did they attempt to keep the press out? Why didn't they warn any neighbors until two hours after the shooting began? Why did they practice the attack weeks in advance, before they had a warrant, even before the alleged "assault" (Panthers pointing a gun at a cop) which resulted in the arrest warrant? Why bring 300 cops, military weapons, dynamite, an armed helicopter and a tank on the first attempt to search a building?

The spirit of the jailed Panthers and of those free to carry on party work is amazingly high. The L.A. 18 are referred to as heroes and victors. The Central St. office has been condemned by the Health Department and the Panthers have been evicted, but they are opening a new office on 113th St. The breakfast-for-children program is continuing and expanding. Their health clinic has now been opened. Much of the Panthers' success in continuing their work is due to tremendous community support, white and black. Much is also due to the mood of victory that still surrounds the Dec. 8 battle and to the clear understanding the government has singled the party out for annihilation. Moderate blacks have been forced to come to terms with the violence of America and defend the Panther program; the movement, black, white and liberal is united around the need to defend the Panthers. If one more Panther were to be killed now, all hell might break loose.

New Haven 14 under pressure

Special to the Guardian

New Haven, Conn.

Months before the New Haven 14 Black Panther murder trial is to begin, the prosecution and police are increasing their coercion and intimidation of the Panther defendants.

Unwilling to wait until the trial starts, the officials are attempting to pressure the defendants into trying to save their own skins at the cost of betraying their comrades in the Panther party, in return for the possibility of lesser punishment.

To date, nine of the defendants, although submitted to eight months of pressure and brainwashing, have withstood this pressure. Two others, Loretta Luckes and Warren Kimbro, have given in to the pressure and have pleaded guilty to various lesser charges.

The Panther defendants, including national party chairman Bobby Seale, are charged with the kidnap-murder of Alex Rackley. If convicted, all face the death penalty. The party maintains that Rackley was a member in good standing of the Panthers and was murdered by police agents.

The police charge that the Panthers thought Rackley was an informer in the New York 21 case and was tried and executed by the Panthers.

Frances Carter, 22, is charged with accessory to murder, kidnapping, conspiracy, and binding. She was pregnant at the time of her arrest, and gave birth under armed guard. Her lawyer, Catherine Roraback, moved last month

that bail be granted because there was no substantial evidence against her. The court was forced to agree that this was so and in a landmark decision bail was granted for the first time ever in a Connecticut capital case. Frances Carter was bailed out on Jan. 19 after her parents scraped up a \$750 bond to secure \$10,000 bail.

Less than two days later, the state called her to the stand, granted her a rather vague immunity and told her she must testify. Her lawyer protested the constitutionality of this move, but was overruled. Facing a bitter choice, Carter nonetheless refused to testify "not because I feared that anything I said would result in any harm to me by my brothers and sisters, but because I love and respect them and the masses of the people and would never turn on them." She was immediately held in contempt of court, her bail was revoked and she was sentenced to six months in jail.

But even this kind of harassment, including being separated from her two-month-old child, did not break Frances Carter's spirit. In a statement written just after her moment of freedom had been terminated, she said: "I'd rather rot in jail than to give state's attorney Markle a chance to try to gain some manhood or inflate his ego any more than what it is. I have the people with me. As long as they remain to have the faith in me, I'll remain strong.... Markle and his lackeys cannot jail my spirit and they definitely can't jail the revolution. Seize the time! All power to the People!"

Panthers grow from ghetto oppression

By Renee Blakkan

Dingy stores multiply in all directions around the Black Panther party ministry of information office in the Bronx section of New York City. Tin cans and filth line the streets, clogged with traffic.

Inside the office, Brenda Hyson, a young Panther woman, described the conditions which gave rise to the Panther party.

"The ghetto," she said. "All the conditions of the ghetto make the formation of a revolutionary party necessary because all the conditions—from disease to poor housing to bad food—constitute a plot of genocide by the power structure against the black people of the United States."

As example she talked briefly of Brownsville, a sprawling black ghetto in Brooklyn where the party is also organizing.

"Brownsville resembles a bombed-out zone," she said. "There's not a block that is not run down, where there aren't buildings burned out, boarded up or completely torn down. Rats run in packs. There must be three, four or five bad fires a day."

From the President of the United States and the ruling class to the slum landlord and the cheating grocer—all, she said, profit from the exploitation and oppression of the black masses. "And that," she continued, "is why there is a Black Panther party."

Genocide, said Brenda Hyson, is when a black child dies of pneumonia in an unheated ghetto apartment. Genocide is when a young man or woman is denied a decent job or the education to get a job. Genocide is when a

teenage kid turns to hard drugs to escape the reality of the white man's black ghetto.

To be poor and black in America, she said, is to be the victim of "a cold, calculated plot lasting from before birth until death."

Talking about drug addicts in the black community, she pointed out that just as opium was used against the people by the rulers of old China, so dope and heroin are used against oppressed people in the U.S. "Until black people gain control of the pig [police] department," she declared, "this problem will continue. The cops permit the drug pushers to operate. The system doesn't want to stop dope."

Poverty programs a hustle

"Poverty programs?" said Brenda Hyson. "They have one going now where you are supposed to call up the Mayor and tell him your problems. These programs aren't meant to serve the people. They are set up to serve the ruling class—and the people know that. The people they get to work on the poverty programs are just hustling for themselves."

One of the reasons the government is cracking down on the Panther party, she said, was that the people in the black community are beginning to realize the Panthers are seriously trying to serve the people while the city, state and federal agencies are serving the hustlers.

The schools also serve the power structure, she said. "The rulers say, 'we will not let blacks get too educated because we need cheap labor, scab labor.'"

The Panthers understand there will never

be a decent life for black people under the capitalist system. "Huey [Newton] writes about how the black man blames himself if he fails. The party points out," she said, "that capitalism makes him fail. The only place outside the ghetto for a black person, in the capitalist's mind, is in the grave."

The Panther party was born out of the needs of the people in black America, she said and the party has developed programs to meet these needs. The police and press try to depict the Panthers as totally absorbed in violence—but the reality, according to Brenda Hyson and party practice, is quite different.

The Panther free breakfast-for-children program in dozens of black communities is a serious effort to feed hungry children—to serve the people or at least that small number of people who can be served within the Panther party's limited resources by providing the semblance of an adequate diet for thousands of young black children.

The party also conducts liberation schools where black children learn revolutionary culture and history. When weather permits, they take the children on field trips. In the liberation classes, children from age three to 10 learn about the party's 10-point program (page 2), "about Huey and Bobby [Seale] and other things that relate directly to their lives," the Panther woman said. "It is the children, fed good food for the first time, learning their true history for the first time, who will make the revolution."

N.Y. tries to smash the Panthers

By Rod Such

The Black Panther party came to New York City in the late summer of 1968. By April 1969, the party's New York leadership was imprisoned and now faces maximum sentences of 150 years in prison in the Panther 21 conspiracy trial. Pre-trial hearings began in February.

But to imagine that the party's original leadership enjoyed a period of at least eight months in which to organize in the black communities of Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant, free from police harassment, is an illusion. New York police fastened their hooks on the Panthers from the moment of the party's inception.

The testimony in the first week of the trial hearing of police inspector William Knapp has clearly revealed the nature and extent of the police actions. The police Special Services Division, known as the Red Squad, infiltrated the Panthers with three full-time undercover policemen, who joined the party when it was organized. The infiltrators were regular police officers, not paid informers, who remained in the party until April 2 last year when the Panther 21 were arrested on the conspiracy charges, according to police sources.

The undercover cops, according to the N.Y. Post, are to be the Manhattan district attorney's key witnesses when he attempts to prove that the Panthers conspired to firebomb five Manhattan department stores, to bomb sections of the New Haven commuter railroad, to attack various police precincts and to bomb the Bronx Botanical Gardens, as charged in the grand jury indictment April 2.

Police harassment

Panther attorney Gerald Lefcourt described the undercover surveillance as a clear indication that "the government wanted to try to set up the party from the beginning and to control its course." It also made it possible to imprison the Panthers on conspiracy charges, for crimes never committed.

During their brief history in New York the Panthers have been continually subject to police harassment. They were attacked by off-duty policemen in a Brooklyn courthouse Sept. 4, 1968; they have consistently faced arrests on petty charges and last October the Harlem office was ransacked.

In the months before their arrests, the Panthers were active in organizing around school decentralization in New York; specifically, the experiment in community control of schools in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district. They established a breakfast-for-children program, a liberation school and organized a successful rent strike, in addition to setting up a center where welfare rights work was done.

Zayd Shakur, the Panther's New York deputy minister of information, has argued that when any militant black group begins relating concretely to black people, it is endemic to the city's power structure to destroy that group. Since the assassination of Malcolm X, emerging black organizations, like the former Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), were destroyed before they could grow and the same police logic was applied to the Panthers, Shakur said.

As prisoners awaiting trial the New York 21 were incarcerated in seven different jails spread across the four boroughs of the city, making it virtually impossible for the defense attorneys to prepare their defense. It took a federal court ruling several months after the indictment before attorneys could meet with the imprisoned Panthers as a group. It also took several months



Mounted cops on guard during N. Y. 21 protest.

before the 24-hour, lights-on lockup, the restricted visiting and recreation rights and other discriminating prison conditions were partially relieved. Even now, however, the Panthers are kept in maximum security, isolated from other prisoners and fed one meal a day in the evening.

Manhattan supreme court and justice John M. Murtagh, the trial judge, in particular, are primarily responsible for the nearly 11 months imprisonment of 12 Panthers currently on trial, held on bail ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000. In the course of the pre-trial hearings, the Panthers have made it clear that their open defiance of the courts is largely due to the violation of their constitutional rights, under the 14th Amendment, because the bail requirements amount to pre-trial detention.

Panther attorneys have appealed for bail reductions at 20 different hearings before five state courts and three federal courts. The U.S. supreme court has delayed for nearly a month its decision on whether to hear the Panther's appeal. The delay, according to the Panther party, is clearly for political reasons.

In refusing to lower bail, Murtagh and justice Charles Marks before him apparently accepted assistant district attorney Joseph Phillips' argument that the Panthers were "terrorists." Despite a nebulous indictment, the fact that bombings did not occur and the backgrounds of most of the Panthers, the justices have in effect determined the Panthers guilty—until proven innocent. The court can barely hide its collusion in a political trial.

The media has played a particularly destructive role in the case of the Panther 21. Beginning with sensationalized accounts of the arrests last April, the press followed up with articles alleging the Panthers received aid from Cuba; were involved in the firebombing of a black church; had stolen funds from a city poverty agency; were involved in the shooting of a black nationalist in Harlem and were linked with the murder of Alex Rackley in New Haven, Conn. None of these allegations panned out, but police continue to leak stories of this nature to the media whenever convenient.

Between the police, the press and the judge, it hardly seems likely the Panther 21 will be back on the streets for a long time to come—which is precisely what the power structure intended the day the first Panther came to New York to organize among the largest concentration of black people in America.

Black oppression in America

By Randy Furst

For 22 million black Americans in the United States, the daily struggle for survival is particularly acute. They are oppressed as blacks and as workers—and in capitalist America, they come out last, economically, politically and of course, as a race.

What follows are statistics outlining that oppression, derived from government reports except where otherwise noted:

Infant mortality rate: Out of every 100 babies who die in infancy, 75% are black babies, the National Urban League said in its 1968 annual report. . . . The infant mortality rate in 1968 was 24.8 per thousand for non-white infants, less than one month old. The rate for whites was 15.6. . . . The infant death rate for one month to a year was 14 per thousand for non-whites. The rate for whites was five per thousand. (There are about 22 million blacks, constituting 11% of the population of the U.S. The term non-white is often used by the Census Bureau. Of the total non-white population, 92% is black.)

Life expectancy: For blacks in the U.S., the Urban League reports that life expectancy was 63.6 years in 1968 while for white Americans, it was 70.19 years.

Income and poverty: Despite the rhetoric of the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon administrations, corporate profits remained far more important than people's incomes and black Americans remained the most oppressed. Based on the government's definition of poverty, there were 25.5 million poor people in the U.S. in 1968 and three out of 10 were black and non-white, the Department of Labor reports. . . . In 1968 the income of black families was only 60% of the median incomes of whites. . . . The median family income of a black family in the U.S. was \$5359 in 1968. The median income for a white family according to the U.S. Dept. of Commerce was \$8936. . . . In 1968 23% of black families had median incomes of less than \$3000. Nine per cent of white families in the U.S. earned less than \$3000. . . . The Commerce Department reports that one-third of all families that were black or non-white earned \$8000 or more. However, inflation has taken its toll on increased incomes. An \$8000 income in 1968 was equivalent to the purchasing power of \$5100 in 1947. . . . Black women workers face the most severe wage discrimination. The income of a black woman is about \$1800 less than a black male. The median income of a full-time black male worker who took home wages or salary in 1968 was \$5370. For a black woman it was \$3561. . . . In 1968, about one half of all blacks who lived in urban areas, lived in poverty areas. Some 55% of blacks lived in central cities.

Unemployment: The unemployment rate among blacks was 6.5% according to Labor Department figures that carry through January 1969, a figure that runs twice that of whites. At the same time, the unemployment rate for black teenagers was 24.4%, compared to 10.8% for white teenagers.

Employment: About 40% of black and other non-whites were in service, laborer or farm occupations, more than twice the proportion of whites who must do such work. . . . In 1890, a reported seven of eight black workers were field workers or servants. Twenty per cent of black or non-white women workers (more than 800,000) are private household workers. . . . Some 45% of all black and non-white workers with children under six

were employed. For white women faced with the same situation, the figure was 28%.

Capitalists: Nixon's promise of creating black capitalists in the U.S. is a myth. It can't happen here. The American ruling class is virtually all white and most black-owned business depends on loans from white-controlled banks, and the white power structure control. . . . As one illustration, there were some 1000 black-oriented radio stations in the U.S. in 1967 which reportedly brought in \$28 million. All but five of those stations were owned by whites, according to History of the Negro in America (1969).

Welfare: Black Americans are disproportionately on welfare. Some 3.8 million black and non-whites received welfare allowances in 1968. An estimated 5.6 million whites received welfare.

The law: According to the Statistical Abstract of the United States for 1969, more than one-third of individuals in prison, reformatories, jails or workhouses were black in 1960. There were 216,049 whites in "correctional" institutions and 133,249 blacks. . . . Between 1930 and 1964 some 1751 whites were executed for alleged crimes. During the same period, 2066 blacks were executed by civil authorities.

Education: On May 17, 1954, in "Brown vs. the Board of Education" the supreme court ruled school segregation was unconstitutional since "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." The Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbade discrimination in public accommodations and employment, rights guaranteed by Constitutional amendments—but discrimination remains a blatant reality. . . . For example, according to the government definition of racial imbalance, 99% of the schools in Los Angeles are segregated. . . . On Sept. 13, Robert H. Finch, Secretary of Health Education and Welfare said that 3327 of 4476 school districts in 17 Southern and border states had been totally desegregated. The Civil Rights Commission has charged that more than 1000 of HEW's "completely desegregated" districts have no black students at all. . . . Black students continue to finish high school at the lowest rates, although the government says the number graduating is increasing. Eighteen per cent of whites and 42% of blacks 20 and 21 years old had not completed high school in 1968. . . . Some 4.3% of the black and non-white population completed college in 1960. In 1969, 6.6% of blacks and non-whites had finished four years of college or more. In 1969, 16.2% of whites had finished four years of college or more. . . . An estimated 3% of medical students in the U.S. are black.

Housing: The Bureau of the Census says that housing which lacks basic plumbing facilities or is dilapidated does not meet specified criteria. A full 24% of black and other non-white households fail to meet this specific criteria. For whites, 6% of the households fell below this minimum standard.

The war in Vietnam: After all this, black Americans must fight in Vietnam against a people struggling for self-determination. In 1966 and 1967, 269,000 black Americans were called for pre-induction examinations by Selective Service. During those two years alone, some 93,000 blacks were drafted. . . . As of March 31, 1969, 67,000 blacks had served in Southeast Asia, and 4000 blacks had died, according to the Defense Department.

Black Panthers: Serving people, fighting repression

(Continued from page 3)

While the party's defense work had helped its growth, the worst was yet to come. Seale and the remaining party leaders faced even greater tasks. Late in November, Seale publicly said the party had been heavily infiltrated by police agents. By December, party branches everywhere were being hit by local police, with public indications for the first time that the attacks were directed from Washington. On Jan. 18, members of the black cultural nationalist "US" organization, known for working with the police, openly murdered two party members in Los Angeles.

To survive the growing attacks, Seale effected a dramatic shake-up of the party's character. Along with chief of staff David Hilliard, he ordered a three-month ban on recruitment and at the same time began a program of intensified political education. These measures accompanied a systematic purge of the party's ranks of "fools and jackanapes" refusing party discipline, indulging in drugs or petty crime, or operating in a "purely military" manner—as well as conscious police agents.

Serve the people

Along with the internal changes, a renewed emphasis was placed on the party's original "serve the people" programs in the black community. Four programs were specified: free breakfast for children, free health clinics, liberation schools and petition campaigns for community control of police. Every branch was required to implement at least the breakfast program and the police petitions.

The first breakfast program started in Oakland, Jan. 20, 1969 and spread to dozens of cities within a few months. The breakfasts—cooked from donated food obtained by the party from local businesses and served in local churches or community centers—were soon feeding thousands of hungry children every day.

While immensely popular, the program was criticized by some radicals as "reformist." Seale answered: "a reformist program is one thing when the capitalists put it up and it's another thing when the revolutionary camp puts it up."



Breakfast for children.

In addition to its own merits, the breakfast program was also an aspect of the party's political defense. The media-created image of the Panthers as a "black mafia" was still widely accepted by whites and even among some blacks where the party was not known. The nationwide practice of serving the people by feeding hungry children was a great help in shattering the false stereotype.

The political reaction to the party's new turn was even more severe and was now being directed by the Nixon administration through the Attorney General's office and the Justice Department. Panther offices across the country were raided. Food supplies for the breakfast program were destroyed. The New York 21 and the New Haven 14 were framed, along with a number of smaller cases. On March 20, Seale, along with 7 white antiwar activists, was indicted on conspiracy charges stemming from the demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

Faced with this onslaught—which decimated the party's leadership, placed hundreds in jail, tied the rest up in court cases, and resulted in at least 19 deaths—Seale and the remaining functional leadership called for

a national conference in mid-July to establish a "united front against fascism."

As far as the Panthers were concerned, fascism was not only a theoretical possibility in the U.S., it was something they felt the brunt of everyday. "People have to realize," said Seale, "that fascism is right in front of their very noses in new garments."

The UFAF meeting was open to anyone—liberal, radical or whatever—who opposed fascism and had the sole purpose of approving and implementing one program: a nationwide campaign for community control of police.

Urgency about defense

Although widely attended, the success of UFAF was limited. Its positive achievement was a renewed sense of urgency among a wide spectrum of groups to rally to the Panthers' defense. However, the petition campaign, although verbally endorsed, never really got off the ground.

In the months since UFAF, the repression of the Black Panther party has continued to escalate. Seale has been imprisoned for four years after being bound and gagged and found in contempt of Judge Hoffman's court. In August he was charged with conspiracy to commit murder in Connecticut. Fred Hampton and Mark Clark have been murdered in Chicago, followed by a police para-military assault on the Los Angeles Panther office. David Hilliard is charged with threatening Nixon's life.

Yet the Panthers have continued to hold their own, to further their programs and to gain even wider support among growing numbers of people—black, brown and white. The party has its problems, to be sure and the assault against them will undoubtedly grow. But so will its will to resist and its chances of final victory.

For information about the Black Panther party or to send contributions, address Ministry of Information, Black Panther party, Box 2967, Custom House, San Francisco, Calif. 94126. A three-month subscription to the party's weekly paper, *The Black Panther*, is available for \$2.50.